Stories of Adventure and Love

GREAT UNDERSTANDING

When Two Hearts Were Awakened

By Walt Gregg

GRESHAM BURLET joined the merry group before the roaring black jack logs in the spacious stone lodge in the mountains where Ted Frierson was giving his annual olks like the mountains ng," Ted was fond of re glad of an oppor- themselves in the big ng the cooped up quar- the long winter months. go trout fishing and gging under dead leaves d anemones. It's the when a house party up makes a big hit."
ht about it. Everybody vd had been having a ro days—that is, every- n Burlet. They looked is way to the fire that the mountains even in

ay you have of jilting aughed Kitty Melears, all by your lonesome. First thing you know, the bears will get you."

"He would welcome a bear in place of a girl," came the friendly jibe of Tom Sullivan. "Believe me, he runs from a petticoat like a chicken from a motor horn."

"But you must admit that I never squawk in getting away," returned Gresham, smiling. He was easily the best looking man in that circle of attractive masculinity. His dark brown eyes usually had a sly twinkle in them and the little bit of gray that was beginning to show on his temples served to give him quite a distinguished air. In his rough gray tweeds he loomed large and compelling in the fitfull firelight.

By the flickering glow from half a dozen candles in an old-fashioned silver holder Amy Rogers began playing on a baby grand piano in the corner. There was a palpitating silence as she sang two or three of the Indian love lyrics. A subtle sympathetic quality rang in her rich soprano voice that brought dreams, memories and hopes to the quiet little group before the fire.

"When I am dying, lean over me tenderly, softly—
Stoop as the yellow roses droop
In the wind from the south;"

sang the girl dramatically.

Ted Frierson felt the stillness charged with a sort of electric thrill. He looked at Amy Rogers' pretty profile, then glanced at Gresham Burlet where he leaned back in his chair, eyes half closed as if he were seeing something in the flames that tightened the muscles in his square jaws and made him clench his hands on the arms of the chair until the knuckles showed white in the firelight. There were those who said that Amy Rogers loved him, but nobody really knew anything about Burlet.

"'So I may when I wake, if there be
an awakening,
Keep what lulled me to sleep,
The touch of your lips on my mouth.'"

There was the purr of a motor on the rocky drive and Ted, hurrying to the door, came back with Anne Duncan, the last member of the house party to arrive. Everybody crowded forward to greet her. Gresham turned to the girl at the piano. "I wish that you would sing that last song over again," he said. Amy waved her hand to the newcomer and then, flattered by the great Burlet's notice of her music, sounded the arrestive chords of the song, "Till I Wake" that she had just finished. Burlet alone did not go forward to meet Anne. Her somewhat startled eyes met his across the dimly lighted room where he stood half in shadow by the piano.

The car that carried Anne up the mountain from the station had brought a bag of mail for the guests, and soon candles blazed everywhere as men and women alike devoured the news. Ted called a maid to show Anne to her room, but Anne only handed her the long silk coat that had covered her traveling dress and urged her host to let her look around a bit. "It's been five years since I was here, Ted. I am going out on the porch to see as much of the dear old mountain as I can in the twilight." Then when Ted had brought Burlet up to be introduced, she held out her hand cordially. "I know Gresham Burlet quite well. He made me have a wonderful time when I was here five years ago, Ted."

"Rotten luck for Anne to show up here, Gresham," said Amy Rogers, coming over to him when Anne had gone out on the wide porch that completely surrounded the picturesque lodge. "She played fast and loose for Lord Beresford four or five summers ago, didn't she?"

Gresham Burlet lighted a cigarette with his big, steady hands before he answered. "I only know one thing about it. She refused to marry me that summer up here. Since that time I have never seen her until today."

Then he walked out on the porch in the direction Anne had taken. He saw the flutter of Anne's gray gown as she disappeared in a little arbor covered with new green trumpet vines and honeysuckle that a soft south wind stirred to fragrance. When she saw him coming, she smiled and made a place for him on the stone bench that half circled the cosy little retreat.

"The valley is beautiful from here," she said, looking off below where one by one the welcoming beacon lights of the farm houses began to shine like fitful fireflies in the golden dusk of evening. "I have been so happy in the thought of coming here again," she told him tremulously. "I can only stay a day or two."

He knew that she had turned and was looking at him, waiting for him to speak. He did not glance toward her, knowing that if he did, he would want to take her into his arms, that had been empty for five interminable years because of her deception. She had led him on to tell of his love only to laugh at him.

"That song Amy was singing to you brought back happy memories of the summer I spent here," she went on, her voice shaking a little.

So she was trying to flirt with him—again!

"Amy is a good little scout," he said in a nonchalant fashion. "She will make a good wife; nice, sensible girl, not mad for admiration like most of you are."

"Gresham, are you going to marry Amy?" she dared suddenly.

"No," he told her shortly. "I cut out romance long ago. 'Man's love is of man's life a thing apart.' That's sane poetry." He had never allowed himself to speak bitterly in all his thirty years; now he proposed to indulge himself. "Going to leave us in a day or two because there is no titled Englishman around, owing to the war?" he said.

"Why, Gresham, that doesn't sound like you!" She rose and started out of the arbor. A rolling stone turned under her foot and she blindly put out her hand for support and touched Gresham's arm. It all happened in a breath of time. She was in his arms, his face pressed against hers, while the tiny pulse in his throat hammered madly.

"I love you," he said, "and I didn't want you to know."

"I loved you years ago, but I was a silly girl and I wanted you to ask me more than once. I didn't want to give in too soon—"

"'So I may, when I awake, if there be
an awakening,
Keep what lulled me to sleep,
The touch of your lips on my mouth,'"

he quoted happily.

Then he kissed her, while all around them settled the peace of night on the mountain and stars in the sky came out, one by one, mirroring the home lights that gleamed in the darkening valley.

BLINDNESS OF LOVE

At That Cupid Can See Very Well

By Elsie Emms

T was in the cool of the morning of a perfect summer day, and down the road that led to the fashionable hotel on the hill, Jean Allen was wending her way.

Quite unconscious as just the touch needed beauty of the scene, ly along, a charming ool linen dress, and

ked, and carefully, for her arm, in long, even —great brown shelled es—while between the bunches of nasturtiool green leaves—the a tempting sight, that e hotel could not fail

ought Jean.
ake as much as I can this month," she said to herself, "if I want to save enough for my last year at art school, for I hear that young Mr. Seton, the new owner, is expected to arrive soon. They say he's very different from his father, so no doubt he'd object to my selling flowers and eggs on the front veranda of his hotel."

"Heigho," and she sighed. "I don't see why some people should have so much money and some so little. However," her usual sunny disposition uppermost once more, "I'll not worry about him until he comes."

Arrived at her destination, her basket was soon emptied, and Jean could have sold many more bunches of flowers if she had them.

"Have you any left for me?" said a deep voice, and a pleasant-looking young man, whom Jean had not noticed before, came forward with a smile.

Jean pointed to her empty basket.

"I should like to order some from you if you will let me," said the young man, "for I am very fond of nasturtiums."

Jean's practical mind at once welcomed a new "customer."

"I can get you as many as you would like," she said, "but I am afraid you will have to wait until tomorrow for them" —with a glance toward the long walk down the hill—"you see I only make one trip a day."

"O," said the young man, walking down the veranda steps with her, "I will come for them at any time you say. You see," as Jean looked surprised, "I drive the machine for this hotel, and I can easily stop at your place to get them. I am John Robb, at your service" —and he smiled.

"Ah," thought Jean, "a chauffeur. Well, at least we are fellow wage earners. He looks as though he might be a young college man, and he loves flowers—that's one thing in his favor."

So she left after promising the flowers for that evening.

Promptly at the hour he rolled up to the modest little white cottage.

"What a fine car," exclaimed Jean, frankly voicing her admiration. "I should think you would be proud to drive such a beauty."

"Won't you let me give you a little ride?" asked the young man—"I'm free this evening, and I'll stop and get the flowers on the way back."

Jean hesitated a moment—but the temptation was too strong; so running back into the house to tell Aunt Anne, she was out again in a moment, and away they sped through the country roads on a never-to-be-forgotten ride.

"Will you come again soon?" asked John Robb eagerly, as he drove up to the little cottage once more. "I am at leisure every evening."

Jean promised, and many a summer night after that the big gray car stood at her door, until Jean came to look forward to her evening rides with something more than expectation.

"Well, tomorrow will be my last day to go to the hotel with eggs and flowers," said Jean, one evening as they were spinning along.

"And pray, why the last?" asked Mr. Robb with surprise in his voice.

Jean told him of her interrupted course at art school because of her Aunt Anne's illness, and of her resolve to earn enough this summer to pay to complete her last year.

"And then I can teach," she said, "and I've really been very fortunate, for I wanted to make the money I needed before the new owner of the hotel came, for I hear he's a most domineering, disagreeable young man."

Her companion started. "Indeed," he remarked drily.

"Yes," went on Jean. "You see, his father owned the hotel, and he died last year ,and so now it belongs to the young Mr. Seton."

"I'm glad I won't have to meet him, for no doubt he'd order me to 'leave at once,' but, thank goodness, he won't have the chance, for after tomorrow I shall have just enough money for my expenses."

"Has the summer been a profitable one for you?" she asked, suddenly realizing that her companion had vouchsafed very little information as to his own plans.

"O, yes!" he answered quickly, and she wondered why he smiled.

Next morning Jean arrived at the hotel a little earlier than usual. None of the guests were in sight.

A bellboy met her at the door, and said:

"O, Miss Jean, young Mr. Seton left word that he would like to see you a moment in the office."

Jean's heart sank, but seeing no way out of it, she deposited her precious basket in a corner, and went in.

The office was deserted, and she sat down to wait.

A door slammed behind her, and she looked around to gaze straight into the smiling face of "the man who drove the car for the hotel."

"I'm waiting to see the new owner," explained Jean; "is he as bad as they say?"

"I'll leave that question for you to answer," said Mr. Robb.

"For me! Why I haven't met him," said the girl. Where is he?"

"Here," answered the young man, and he held out his hands.

"Jean, dear, please forgive me—my name is John Robb Seton—but I couldn't bear that you should know it, until you had changed your opinion of him."

"But—but—I—really — really—I don't see," faltered the girl, bewildered.

"I know, dear," said he, "but then you must remember, "Love is always blind."

And he took her in his arms.

'HE ARBUTUS TRAIL

A Little Romance of the Fields

By Harold Hass

AURIE PERCIVAL was chewing the tough sandwich and sipping the lukewarm water which constituted her daily lunch. She sat at the table with her head on one hand ablecloth, which sadly

It was "dress up hion and she had sold ouses that, although it day, she was tired un- is not very strong this it perhaps that was not ad lived without meat orn a coat not nearly eep out the cold. Add- was heart sick as only they are lonely and n grass and flowers. from the country four had not had a glimpse could she when it took to keep her secure in back room at Mrs. she ate out of paper bags things which always seemed to smell and taste one way?

The common little restaurant was crowded with working people who ate for necessity's sake rather than pleasure. Among them Laurie, with her youth and sweetness and beauty, was the most conspicuous object. That was why the tall, brown girl entering with a flat basket on her arm saw Laurie first and pushed past two tables to get to her. She did not speak, she merely lowered the basket so that Laurie could look into it. And Laurie, starting from dreary reverie, looked into a tangle of the freshest and most fragrant natural pink that ever was.

Arbutus! One whiff of that fragrance and she was snatched away to damp, upspringing woods where the peewees called among the shadows unafraid. At the edge of a patch of snow nestled a bunch of white arbutus, rosiest of all. She had found the prize. She—

The girl had gone to the next table. Swiftly Laurie fumbled in her purse. No; she needed medicine more than flowers. She dare not. Wistfully she watched the girl move from table to table. It was astonishing how many people bought. Perhaps the girl's smile acted like magic. It made Laurie think of spring sunshine on brightening fields. The girl caught Laurie's glance, and as she passed she flung a little tangle of white upon Laurie's plate. Then she was gone.

Laurie trembled as she lifted the little bunch of white arbutus. She pressed it to her face. Then she sprang up and hurried after the girl. She must thank her if no more.

The brown girl slipped between knots of people and was lost. Laurie darted after her. At a crowded corner a street car paused and the girl climbed aboard. Laurie was too late, but at that moment another car swung around the corner headed in the same direction. Laurie entered this. It was bound for the station. At the station she felt she would find the grl and thank her. She must thank her. She thought no farther than that. Indeed, she was only conscious of two things—of the little sweet bunch of white arbutus in her hand and of the queer, pleasant smile of the brown girl. The store and her work had for the present dropped out of her mental existence.

The girl was not in the waiting room at the station. Laurie ran out upon the platform. A long train was making ready to depart and few belated passengers were hurrying aboard. Laurie caught sight of a brown coat and a basket mounting the steps. The train began to move before Laurie could reach it. The car passed, then another. As the third car passed Laurie sprang and clutched. Some one caught her as her foot touched the step and pulled her aboard. Laurie looked into the face of a big, rosy young fellow, whose blue eyes were a bit stern.

"Don't you ever try that again!"

Laurie started to enter the third car, but he stopped her. "That's the smoker," he said. "Look out, there!" He guided her into the second car, for the train was running fast now, bumping past the switches. Laurie sank into the first seat. When she looked up to thank the young man he was gone.

The conductor's appearance brought Laurie out of the daze that had succeeded such swift action. Her ticket! She had none. She did not even know where she wanted to go.

"I'm crazy," she thought. "They'll put me off the train." Then she pressed the white arbutus to her face and the scent of it brought back her courage. "I'll pay to the the next station," she thought. By the time she had done this she had recovered her breath. In the car ahead was the brown girl. She would seek her.

People stared at her as she made her way through the swaying coaches—she was so white, so wistful, and she held so tightly to the little bunch of white arbutus. Half way down the second car she saw a familiar basket in the rack and under it a broken hat. She was breathless again as she paused beside the seat.

"I beg your pardon!" she began faintly. The brown girl looked up. She seemed to take in everything at once—her own flowers and the lovely little sick face with its beseeching expression. She reached up and pulled Laurie down beside her. It's you!" she said. "You see, I know it's you because I only had the one bunch of white arbutus. It seemed to belong to you some way."

"I want to thank you," Laurie began. Then with a great sob, "Oh, do you think I'm crazy? But I left my work, I left everything, just to follow your kind smile and thank you."

She told it all and what she did not tell the brown girl seemed to read from her eyes. She took Laurie's hand in her cool, strong one, the other hand she laid on the color that was rising too rapidly in Laurie's thin cheeks.

"I'm glad you followed my smile," she said. "I'm going to take you home with me. You need mothering, and my own mother is just the person to give it to you."

By the time the train stopped at the little station to which she had paid, Laurie was too ill and bewildered to do more than obey the brown girl's superior common sense. An old fashioned surrey was waiting. In the surrey sat a rosy, white-haired woman holding the reins over the big black horse. She was the brown girl's mother and she needed only a word of explanation in order to give Laurie welcome. The brown girl and Laurie got into the back seat.

Then the rosy young fellow who had helped Laurie aboard the train appeared quietly. "I'll drive Kitty home for you, Aunt Lou," he said. He gave Laurie a surprised glance. "Why, Margaret, where'd you get hold of her?"

"She came to me," Margaret Appleby answered gently. "Hush, Jim. She's sick." Laurie was indeed very sick. She lay days in the best bedroom of the farm-house, cared for by Margaret and her mother. A doctor came, but even he could not for a long time loose her hot hand from the forlorn little bunch of white arbutus it held. But at last she got well. Then spring was a thing of green and gold and blue then and while she sat resting on the porch Jim Appleby had a way of leaving his work and coming over the fields to talk to her.

To Jim and Laurie white arbutus will be to the last day of their lives the symbol of all that is sweet and desirable and lasting and holy.

LETTERS THAT WIN

Dan Cupid Makes Good In Writing

By Contributors

ted by S. G.
Dear Doc—My hand can scarcely hold the pen and I am afraid that this will appear unintelligible being wet with tears from beginning to end. When your letter arrived we and my father reading erein it was said that the army were called was a great deal hopes remained till nvinced me that my t too well founded. human expectations! e dream of happiness ng we are very, very sing myself that one joined our hands, and ted perhaps for years r how do I know that bring me an acc-at of your being killed in battle, and then farewell everything in this world. My pleasing prospects will then vanish, and although unmarried I will remain a widow till death. And is it possible you can doubt one moment of my sincerity? Or do you think that these affections can be placed on another which were first fixed on you? No, my dear, my fidelity to you shall remain unspotted as this paper before it was blotted with ink and bedewed with tears. I know not how others love, but mine is forever. You desire me to put you in mind of your duty. I know not of any faults nor am I disposed to look for them. I doubt not that religious education you received from your dear mother in your youth will enable you to resist all temptations. And like that everlasting honor to your colors, Doc, although not afraid to do your duty to the sick and wounded, you will be afraid to sin. My dear Doc, never be afraid of religion. In the meantime my prayers shall constantly be for your safety and my earnest hopes fixed on your happy return home. Let me hear from you as often as possible, but never doubt my fidelity. Consider me as already yours, and I am happy. Farewell, my dear, and may the wisdom of God direct you is the sincere prayer of one who prefers you before all the world. Lovingly yours,

LILLIAN.

Contributed by C. S. L.

My Soldier Husband—All I can hope now is that this letter reaches you safely, dearest, for it contains precious news, news which I know will fill your whole being with joy. It is not quite a year since you have left me all alone, a little war bride, while you went away to fight for our country to make the world safe for me. How lonesome was I in the months that followed and how I sympathized with other war brides like myself. But I am no longer alone, sweetheart, for into our little home has come a darling little girl, oh, so sweet! Yes, dear, she is now only a week old and I haven't been able to write to you sooner. I am all right, Hon, so don't worry about me. It was sort of hard at first to know that you wouldn't be here to hold my hand and to encourage me at the critical moment, but later I reasoned thusly: "Hubby is suffering for his country and he doesn't complain." That made me feel sort of mean, and I wanted to show that I didn't mind "doing my bit." That bit happens to be a difficult task. To be left alone without one's hubby and with a little daughter. Think how nice it would be if you were here now! But, then, I won't complain, dearest, for all my sacrifices have been for love—love for you and love for my country and yours.

You men go off to war and suffer, while we women remain at home doing nothing for the country. Why should not we share a part of the burden and willingly become "war brides?" And, Hon, as I look upon the tiny sleeping bundle of humanity near me I am glad oh, so glad, that I married you. She has blue eyes and light hair and her skin is white and velvety. She's a "prize baby," Dr. Jones said, and, really, she's the prettiest in the world. I named her after my dear mother. She's such a good baby, too. How I just wish you could see her.

Take good care of yourself, dear, for you are now a father and will have to come back and assume the responsibilities of that high office. Don't let the Germans get you, and do try to catch that wicked kaiser. Please; that's the boy! You see, once Bill is off the throne you'll land safely back home. As it is, I wonder when we'll see you.

Just thing, Hon, you left a weeping little (?) girl behind and now when you come back you'll find a fond mother and an adoring young daughter. Isn't God kind to us, dear? So never for one moment forget Him and all He has done for us.

Mothers don't have time to write much, so I'll close for tonight. Will write soon again. If you can't write, just love us and pray for us always, dear. With best love, your little war bride. "CHERIE."

Contributed by J. A. V.

Dearest Harry—It is just two years ago today since we bade each other good-by. Two years ago last night since you held me in your arms and told me how much I meant to you, and then the cruel war came. And since that day when I sat beside you at the station and you helped me on the train and waved farewell to me, Oh, that day I last looked on you! We have never met since. In France you are fighting for the glorious U. S. A., and though I love you more than ever, still I am glad to know that you are doing your duty. You may come back to me and you may not, but we will both meet in another world where God in his justice allows no such cruel conflicts as are now ensuing over the entire world simply to gratify the greed of a simple being with a title. I will love you always and more each day. Good-by. JOAN.

Her Answer.

Dear Harry—Your letter asking me to marry you and accompany you on your journey West is before me.

I can make a reply to your candid question at once. I do not need to deliberate upon it long. I love you; I confide in you; I will trust you; I will go with you; I will accept the love and the future you offer. You may have many joys; you may experience many sorrows; I will share and bear them all with you, trusting that patient, earnest, willing effort may crown our labors with success. Believing that God will guide and prosper us, I can only add, hoping to see you soon, that I am,

Ever yours, CLARA.